

**Minutes of the Personnel Committee**  
**Tuesday, March 7, 2006**

Chair Paulson called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. and led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Present:** Supervisors Duane Paulson, Bonnie Morris, Tom Bullermann, Jeff Morris, Rob Hutton, Genia Bruce and Bob Thelen. Supervisor Rob Hutton arrived at 1:09 p.m.

**Also Present:** Chief of Staff Lee Esler, Sheriff Dan Trawicki, Employment Services Manager Sue Zastrow, Office Services Coordinator Windy Jicha, Clerk of Courts Carolyn Evenson, Treasurer Pamela Reeves, Supervisor Dick Manke, Reed Epstein of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Supervisor Kathleen Cummings, Supervisor Bill Mitchell.

**Public Comments**

Supervisor Cummings discussed why she felt the employee performance evaluation and reward program should be reevaluated, changed and/or eliminated.

**Approve Minutes of 2/21/06**

MOTION: Bonnie Morris moved, Thelen second, to approve the minutes of February 21, 2006. Motion carried 6-0.

**Schedule Next Meeting Date**

- March 21<sup>st</sup>

**Preliminary Discussion and Strategy for Establishing Salaries for Elected Officials**

Paulson said historically we've used a formula based on non-represented employee pay increases with a four-year lag to determine elected officials salaries. The six constitutional (elected) official titles included in this debate are county executive, county clerk, treasurer, register of deeds, sheriff and clerk of courts. Paulson explained that because of the four-year lag, pay increases for non-represented employees in 2003 affect elected officials salaries in 2007, 2004 increases affect 2008, etc. This decision will affect the 2006 election for years 2007 through 2010.

Supervisor Hutton arrived at 1:09 pm

Paulson said he talked to the county executive and he said he will approve an ordinance to increase salaries if we use a formula that is explainable. Normally the county board puts together an ordinance and sends it to the county executive. Paulson explained that after the committee discusses this today, staff will compose an ordinance for a future meeting. This plan needs to be acted on by June 1.

Bruce said she would like to remain consistent with the formula.

Hutton asked if Zastrow had any information on salary comparisons with other Midwest counties? Zastrow said county wages are all over the place because the jobs duties are different all over. Most counties haven't set 2007 salaries yet.

Bullermann said he would like to maintain a process that is fair and equitable. It is important that the salaries we offer are in favor of keeping and recruiting good talent and to ensure the county is a well-managed operation.

Thelen said he understands there is a formula but doesn't understand why that wasn't used when it came to setting county board supervisors' salaries. Supervisors didn't get a raise and no other elected county officials stepped forward to take less than we did. We should look at not increasing these salaries in the

first two years and then 3% increases for years three and four.

B. Morris said she doesn't agree with Thelen. She asked Paulson, when he talked to the county executive about this, did the county executive say anything about keeping his salary the same? Paulson said no the county executive did not mention it. Morris said she doesn't have a problem increasing the salaries. If we don't keep the salaries competitive we won't attract quality people. It needs to be equitable. You can't compare these salaries with other counties because all county officials have different duties. She would like to keep the increase in line with the employee salaries. Waukesha County doesn't have the same turnover as other counties do.

J. Morris said the percentage figures look reasonable and not out of line but we should review comparables. He would like to see what other counties pay elected officials. Can this data be pulled together?

Esler said it's difficult to make comparisons with counterparts in other counties without evaluating job responsibilities. All sheriffs take care law enforcement duties but there are different size counties and departments. The register of deeds, treasurer and clerk of courts can tell you about differences in their counter parts duties versus what they do.

Zastrow said she can easily get wage information through an association she belongs but it doesn't show the job responsibilities. It would be difficult to get job duties. J. Morris asked Zastrow to pull together those numbers. Zastrow said she would. B. Morris asked Zastrow to survey elected official salaries of southeastern Wisconsin counties and counties that are of similar size.

Paulson asked Esler to write an ordinance outlining the salaries using the formula we have used in the past and then the committee can amend the ordinance as needed.

Evenson and the committee discussed at length the conundrum of the clerk of courts term changing from a two-year to a four-year term and which years non-represented staff salary increases the clerk of courts salary should be based on. Esler said the clerk of court's salary could increase at the rate of the last two years for four years and shouldn't go back four years. The clerk of courts salary should increase 3% for the entire term. Paulson disagreed and said we should go with the redundant formula for the clerk of courts.

J. Morris said he wants to see a spreadsheet of how the different salary scenarios play out.

B Morris said she doesn't like that all the elected officials don't get the same increases. She would like them to get the same increase. Paulson said the increases for the past two years were 3% annually. The two-year officials would get 3% for two-years. The clerk of courts would get 3% for four years whereas the county executive would get 2.8%, 1.7%, 3% and 3%. B. Morris said she wants all these elected officials to get the same raise. Paulson said it's not apples to apples because the clerk of courts is transitioning from a two- to a four-year term.

J. Morris said he wants to make the exception. He wants the staff to put together a spreadsheet showing the costs of the different scenarios. Esler said the clerk of courts would be \$1000 ahead by 2010 if an exception were made giving her a 3% increase each year for four years.

Thelen said he doesn't mind making an exception with the formula. Bullermann said the committee needs to look at the data to give an opinion. Hutton said he agrees with moving forward with the formula. He struggles with retrofitting the clerk of courts salary based on the formula. Bruce said she too would like to see comparisons.

## **Discuss Annual Report on Employee Performance Evaluations and Awards**

B. Morris left the room for this discussion because of a conflict of interest.

Zastrow reviewed the report titled Performance Awards Based on 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005 Performance. This year the total number of people eligible increased by nine to 329. The total award distributed in 2005 was \$401,452, which is \$107,679 less than the amount awarded in 2004. In 2005, 259 people out of the 329 eligible received non-base accumulating performance awards totaling \$264,758. This is a reduction of \$60,600 from the prior year. In 2005, 141 people out of the 180 eligible received performance awards added to their base salary totaling \$136,694 which is \$47,079 less than the total award in 2004. Zastrow gave a history on the evaluation and award system and explained which employees are eligible for the awards.

Hutton asked is the bonus formula based on the ratings? Zastrow said it's not a straight formula. Some supervisors/managers give higher scores while others are more conservative. In order to get a performance award, employees need to be rated at least greater than effective. The evaluating supervisor recommends the amount of award. Department heads review the recommendations. They may equalize the amounts but will still give the same award. The maximum amount per award is 0% to 3%. Once quality control is done, the reports are sent to human resources where Zastrow prepares a report from the data and shares the report with the county executive. The county executive will discuss anything he finds out of line with department heads.

J. Morris said he doesn't understand the magnitude of the increases. He would like to see a spreadsheet of the percentage increases and amounts given for all recipients. Zastrow said this is a one-time award. It goes away. J. Morris said this unorthodox, confusing and difficult to understand but he agrees with incentives.

Zastrow said the system was put in place to save money and to differentiate by performance. Before this system, everyone got a step increase if their performance was ok. If you worked very hard and did good work you got the same increase as someone who did the bare minimum. This is a cost effective way to reward employees.

Hutton said he too would like to see the amounts. It is nice to retain base salaries and give bonuses. In the private sector bonuses are much larger and tied into profits. You can't do that in government. Zastrow said the intent of the program is to reward performance and motivate those who need to improve.

Bullermann said he's comfortable that the program is being administered fairly and hasn't heard anyone complain. Paulson said this was put on the agenda because the committee reviews the report annually at this time. It was Supervisor Cummings' idea to do away with the awards. Paulson said he doesn't wish to eliminate the awards. Bullerman said he's not interested in changing or eliminating the awards.

J. Morris said the county is paying social security and pension for these amounts. Could the county put the award money into health savings accounts? The employees would get more money if we did this.

Paulson said from what he is hearing from committee members, no one is in favor of eliminating the awards program.

B. Morris returned to the room.

### **Discussion on Downsizing the County Board**

Paulson said he is disappointed that this has become an us versus them issue. He sees the board as citizen legislators. It seems like people are throwing darts to determine the size of the board. He'd hate to see the board reduced to a point where supervisors can't campaign without spending lots of money. Two ordinances came through to downsize the board, which if approved would take effect for the 2008 supervisor election. If the board is downsized, the Personnel Committee will have to work on developing new rules for the code. Chair Dwyer is at the NACo legislative conference in Washington D.C. gathering information on how boards work throughout the United States.

Esler said staff has been given the assignment of researching board issues via the Internet. Dane County is looking at comparable data from similar counties. Dwyer and Krahn are in Washington D.C. asking people from other counties how their boards are run. From the Internet you can't learn how the boards and commissions operate. Two-thirds of counties in the U.S. have three, five or seven commissioners. In 1965, the State Supreme court made unit representation unconstitutional in Wisconsin. Up until that time, the Waukesha County Board had representative entitlements and 74 supervisors. After the ruling Waukesha's board was reduced to 35 members. Based on the Baker Ruling in 1961, the "one man, one vote" rule was developed. Counties had to be represented by people rather than places. State statutes and a state study established the maximum number of supervisors based on population. No minimums were ever established by statutes. All Wisconsin counties boards downsized due to this rule change and many have stayed at statutory maximums.

Esler said Wisconsin's government was based on a unit model via the New York model, which features large local governing bodies. Other governments in the US were formed with the Pennsylvania model, which is based on a representative government. Two-thirds of governments are based on commission forms of governments with small boards that hire a county administrator or manager. When you look at governments you have to take them with a grain of salt. Texas has a weak state government with the elected county officials wielding more power than state officials. In several states the elections are partisan races with a set number of democrats and republicans. The highest vote getter is the chairman for the four-year term and he decides what is on agendas and what is not.

Thelen said the current county executive said he wanted to downsize the board to get more power. If you downsize too small, you will get politicians. When the supervisors leave here, they go back to their jobs. People throw numbers out there but they don't say how much supervisors will get paid. The debate has to go to voters and petition signers. Maybe we should propose a lower wage for the county executive. There are people calling us "pigs at the trough." If this is such a great deal, why aren't these people running for election?

B. Morris said there needs to be reasons to downsize. She looked at how many supervisors are on boards of the higher populated counties in the state. The average number of supervisors is 29.7. Dane County has 37 supervisors now and some want to downsize it to 19. Waukesha County Supervisors represent the third highest number of constituents per supervisor in the state. Only Dane and Milwaukee Counties are higher. It is about representation. In addition to the six statutory board committees and the Executive Committee, there are 30 other commissions and boards that supervisors are appointed to. She serves on two committees and five lake districts. If the board were reduced to 11 members they would have to be full time to complete the work. If 11 supervisors were paid an annual salary of \$45K, the total cost would be \$495K. Currently, our 35 part time supervisors' salaries total \$325,500, which is \$169,500 less than 11 full time supervisors salaries. She is not convinced we should downsize but would consider reducing the board to 25. She thinks the board will become political if it is reduced to less than 19 members. She doesn't want to be involved with partisan elections.

J. Morris said it is better when government does less rather than more. The reason people don't run for supervisor is they can't come to day meetings. How many supervisors have regular nine to five jobs? How many people can set their own hours? He is in favor of reducing the board and changing the meetings to nighttime. He has no problems serving more constituents and he is willing to serve on more nighttime committees. He supports reducing the board to 11, 19 or 25 members and keeping the members at a part time status. In the Washington D.C. area they have nine supervisors making \$25K per year who meet at night. Younger people are under represented on the board. Ninety percent of all county board votes are unanimous. Why do you need 35 people voting the same way? He thinks a smaller board could be done effectively with structural changes. We need to think about what works and the most efficient way to run government.

Bruce disagreed with J. Morris regarding evening meetings because it would sacrifice family time. If you go to a board of 11, the supervisors will need to be full time to get the work done and it will cost more. She has been on the board since 1998 and finds it functioning well. We're very efficient and she would like to see it continue that way unless someone comes up with a better way to run things.

Paulson said the City of Waukesha has night meetings and they have the same problem of not having any new people run for office. He's proud of what the board has done. He would like to know what hasn't been getting done? Are we supposed to slam dunk a number for the board or should we investigate options? He's disappointed that those supervisors not in favor of changing the board size are being talked poorly of. He gets angry reading that people think supervisors serve to further their political careers. He does it to serve the public. Paulson said this will pass by hysteria.

Thelen said Racine County downsized in 2002. How many supervisors are running unopposed?

Bullermann said he's open to changes but not without enough information. It's unfair to ask board members to make a decision unless we have researched the issue. Why would he vote on this without first researching it when he would never vote on any issue without first studying it? Bullermann said he listened to radio host Jeff Wagner talk about how inaccessible the supervisors are to hear the downsizing debate. It speaks volumes that no public is here today to listen to our discussion and talk with us. It was well known this was on the agenda. Supervisors are open to discussion and debate. In his two years on the board, he hasn't seen anything broken.

MOTION: Jeff Morris moved, Bonnie Morris second, to adjourn the meeting at 3:15 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie J. Morris  
Secretary